DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 285 445 HE 020 526

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TITLE Incentives for Advising.
PUB DATE [87]
NOTE 26p.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academic Advising; *College Faculty; Higher Education; *Incentives; Job Satisfaction; *Rewards; Self Concept; *Teacher Attitudes; *Teacher Motivation; Teacher Responsibility; Work Attitudes

ABSTRACT

Motivations and incentives for advising are considered to help promote faculty members' sense of accomplishment and productivity. Intrinsic rewards and motivation are distinguished from extrinsic rewards for successful performance. A framework for viewing intrinsic rewards and motivation is considered that involves "possible selves" (i.e., views that faculty members' have about their potential). Possible selves are important because they function as incentives for future behavior and provide a context for the current view of self. Ways that the incentive value of advising might be increased for faculty are suggested, including: define the goals and measures of performance in the advising program and hold faculty accountable for reasonable achievement; renegotiate priorities rather than adding new performance expectations; individualize incentives; and allow the advisor the freedom to choose when and how to use the reward. A model of job characteristics and employee attitudes is considered to clarify the intrinsic nature of faculty members' work and the advising function. It is suggested that the values behind the advising role be addressed on campus and that faculty members be allowed to participate in management of the advising program. (SW)

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INCENTIVES FOR ADVISING

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* The author wishes to thank David Macklin for his helpful comments on earlier drafts of this manuscript.

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Incentives for Advising

How do you make advising more appealing to advisors? That is, of course, a question that advising coordinators attempt to answer. The question becomes what serves as an incentive or a reward for advisors? What influences advisors to modify their behavior? Can changes in advisor behavior be linked to advising outcomes?

We assume that advising of students by faculty will remain, or become, an item of increasing importance to most colleges and universities. The increase of underpreparedness among matriculants, increasing cost and complexity of higher education, the impact of increasing technological advances on curriculum offerings, and demands for demonstrated competencies of graduates by various interested publics all contribute to the environmental press on the institution. One actual solution used by academic institutions for responding to the intensity of the pressure is to turn to advising as a means of demonstrating, in fact or symbolically, the institution's concern about these problems.

Predictions are that extrinsic forces will pressure campus decision makers into developing mechanisms to enhance faculty vitality and renew institutional quality and viability.(1) Institutions are just beginning to integrate the full range of professional development into the mainstream of policy. According to Bevan (2) academic institutions must provide a

structure that reinforces community and enhances professors' power to carry out their duties creatively and effectively. Institutions must look to regular functions of the organization as a means of both providing anticipated educational services and of enhancing the work life of those providing the service.

One difficulty facing attempts to improve advising is that advising is a private activity. In contrast, both teaching and research are more public endeavors in that "products" of these efforts are more visible in the academic community. Institutional sponsorship of "improvements" in teaching or research permit or encourage individual faculty to produce "outcomes" that may be known, if not assessed, by their colleagues. In contrast, advising contains no such opportunity for recognition. Consequently, improvements in advising performance are associated with few, or no, visible benefits or correctives of import for the advisor. Thus, efforts to improve advising competence must explore how connections between institutional need for improving advising and faculty interest in the activity may be enriched in a mutually beneficial manner.

The key of course is the degree of congruence between institutional mission and faculty behavior. To the extent that institutions can support a professional development program that acknowledges the breadth of faculty interests within the scope of institutional mission, they will spread the consequences of vitality more effectively.(3) One problem is that as advising becomes more important to the institution, and is counted on to provide a greater contribution to institutional mission, the

level of responsibility for faculty advisors rises accordingly, as does the institution's desire for accountability.

The focus of this paper is on how an increased understanding of the motivations or incentives inherent in advising may be used as a vehicle to enhance faculty's sense of accomplishment and thus their productivity.

The Advising Program

In general, advising service by faculty has not, historically, been accorded the status of a task deserving of formal institutional recognition, beyond the assignment of specific students to specific advisors. Although often espoused as a factor included in evaluation, along with the big three of research, teaching, and service, most residents of academe are clear that although poor advising performance exists as a potential source of dissatisfaction to the administration, excellence in advising is not a factor that contributes to satisfying conditions for advancement in the eyes of the Dean.

The fact is that the institutional need to improve advising services may, surprisingly, be in accord with faculty dispositions. Bess (4) reported that an unusually large proportion of faculty (44%) like to engage in career guidance for undergraduates, an activity not far removed from academic advising activities. This finding is suggestive of considerably less resistance to advising kinds of activity on the part of faculty than one might expect (p. 149). If we assume, then, that advising performance must be improved or enhanced we must identify those factors that influence advising performance.

Motivations for Advising

In terms of advising by faculty we are concerned with the nature of the relationship between task expectations and reward expectations. Changes in one set of expectations are likely to produce changes in the second set. Changes in reward expectations, for example, should alter task expectations for advising, which in turn affect task performance in advising. The incentive value of advising for advisors (i.e. reward) should affect the advisor's task expectations and, in turn, their advising performance.

By definition, an incentive is something that stimulates action or effort. Baldwin and Krotseng (5) suggest incentives that stimulate professional growth and productive activity can heighten morale and contribute to the overall effectiveness of the organization. In like manner, incentives act to reinforce the value of the activity, or the consequence attained, and serve as a motivator for continued or increased levels of involvement.

Here we need to differentiate between rewards that are external, or extrinsic, to the task, and rewards that are connected to an individual's own motives or interest, that is internal, or intrinsic, rewards associated with task involvement. Various studies of faculty members' satisfactions indicate that intrinsic aspects of their work are more important to faculty members than extrinsic motivators. (6) Intrinsic motivation may be understood as the forces that lead you to do the things that you do in your work when there is no explicit,

tangible reward for your doing so. An institution's concern for rewards -internal or external- will always entail its acting with respect to two general questions: (1) standards of allocation, and (2) referential structures. While these are outside the focus of this paper, I will describe them briefly.

If we assume that incentives (rewards) are distributed as a consequence of involvement with the activity, or by the agents of the organization, one question that must be answered concerns standards for the allocation of reward. At least three could be considered: contribution, equality, and need. Are rewards to be dependent on what one produces? What others receive? or What one needs? We assume here, of course, that the dispensation of rewards is mediated, at least in part, by decisions made by the recipients or the agents of the organization.

The term referential structure denotes the socially-conditioned beliefs about how individual characteristics are associated with differences in reward distribution. According to Berger and colleagues (7) the three structures are categorical, ability, and performance outcome. The first structure invokes criteria of "who you are," the second of "what you can do" (or "what your capacities are)" and the third is related to "what you have done" (or "what you have accomplished)."

This discussion will not focus further on extrinsic reward for two reasons. First, it unlikely that financial constraints will permit extensive use of increasing levels of external rewards. Second, evidence suggests that using extrinsic rewards

leads to a devaluing of the activity so rewarded and requires reward levels to spiral higher if incentive value is to be maintained.

Incentive Systems

McClelland (8) suggests that motives are important for predicting what people will spontaneously do, whereas values are more important for determining what they will cognitively decide should be done. In the context of advising of students, values espoused in academic culture(s) suggest that advising is important to do and to do well. On the other hand, the activity of advising would have to satisfy some motive for us to persist at high levels of performance. We might expect, then, that if we perceived increased skill at that activity, it would lead to increased levels of engagement with the activity. To put it another way, a person's belief that he or she is likely to be successful in an activity does not lead to involvement with that activity unless the individual is motivated to use the skill.

In particular, it appears that the paradigm of rewards as reinforcement for task success versus rewards as symbols of task mastery may provide a framework for thinking about the provision of rewards in an advising context. On the one hand, to the extent that an activity (advising) is seen as a means to an extrinsic goal (i.e. reward for task success), engagement in that task will depend on the availability of the extrinsic reward.

However, under the conditions of an extrinsic reward structure, one may predict that the task may be perceived as less inherently interesting and, in the absence of extrinsic rewards, will be less likely to be performed. The reader is well aware that contemporary academic reward systems, including promotion and other special status designations, prizes, and special privileges, send clear signals to faculty and operate as a significant force in shaping the direction and intensity of professors' activities.

On the other hand, to the extent that the dispensation of the reward conveys positive information on subjects' competence in the task or skill in the target activity, i.e. symbolic reward of task mastery, intrinsic liking for the task will be enhanced and will result in greater probability of engagment in the task. This increase in intrinsic motivation can be understood by reference to the "cue to success" function of reward (9). In other words, winning the reward signals an excellence at the activity and this in turn enhances interest in the activity. As already implied, a sense of personal efficacy in mastering tasks is more apt to spark interest in them than is self-perceived ineffic acy in performing competently.

Rewards or recognition for task mastery in advising, which reflect on personal efficacy, should be distinguished from performance-continguent rewards gained by performing routine activities. Acknowledgement that one has performed routine advising duties on schedule is unlikely to engender any incentive value. On the other hand, recognition of outstanding

skill in accomplishing performance does provide incentive. According to Bandura, (10) gaining knowledge and skills that enable one to fulfill personal standards of merit tend to heighten interest and a firm sense of efficacy. Success in attaining desired outcomes through challenging performances can further verify existing competencies and enhance images of self that are intrinsically satisfying.

The World of Possible Selves

One framework that warrants additional exploration in relation to intrinsic rewards and motivation is that of possible selves. According to Markus and Nurius, (11) possible selves represent individuals' ideas about what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming, and thus provide a conceptual link between cognition and motivation. Possible selves are the cognitive components of hopes, fears, goals, and threats, and they give the specific, self-relevant form, organization, and direction to those dynamics.

This type of self-knowledge pertains to how individuals think about their potential and about their future. Faculty, whatever their station, also contemplate the possibilities that might yet be. These thoughts represent specific, individually-significant hopes, fears, and fantasies. Possible selves are important because they function as incentives for future behavior (i.e. they are selves to be approached or avoided) and second, because they provide an evaluative and intrepretive context for the current view of self. Readers may

have witnessed the transformation of faculty advisors who, initially, were resistant or obstructionist and then, quite suddenly, were energized, focused, and, almost, enamoured of the advising "challenge." In part, what may have occurred is that the connection between advising and some possible self of the advisor served as an incentive to fashion the significant shift in advisor behavior and attitude.

The authors remind us that the individual's collection of self-conceptions and self-images can include the good selves (the ones we entertain fondly), the bad selves (the ones we would rather forget), the hoped-for selves, the feared selves, the not-me selves, the ideal selves, and the ought selves (p957). For the advising coordinator, this eventuality of the various selves requires a sensitivity to the possibility that a singularly negative or unproductive set of advising experiences could activate an "unsuccessful professional" possible self for some advisors. For instance, the actions which require a self-presentation as competent or confident are difficult to negotiate when behavior is mediated by a working self-concept that features the "unsuccessful professional" possible self as a focal point. This may, in part, account for some advisors' requests for more information or training or why some advisors are somewhat reticent about performing advising duties.

In contrast, achieving a desired goal, perhaps carrying out a difficult advising task, is likely to activate positive possibilities such as the "successful professional" possible self. In this context, success at the advising task takes on a

very distinctive set of meanings. For some period of time, the self is not just a self that completed a difficult advising task, but a self that is the competent academic, a mentor of note to students and others, and a professional model for peers to emulate. The individual's feelings and immediate actions are likely to be markedly influenced by the nature of this context of possibility. But, as we noted earlier, advising is a private process - which the individual and the institution are reticent to acknowledge - which has, potentially, a significant impact on the faculty member's psyche.

For example, Bowen and Schuster (12) describe aspects of the factors providing intrinsic satisfaction for faculty. The intrinsic rewards include the satisfactions derived from intellectual curosity, interest in ideas, exercise of rationality, opportunity for achievement and self-expression, fascination with complexity, ability to solve difficult problems, the pleasure of expertness, and participation in decisions affecting one's life (p 113). One would hope that some of the aspects of the advising activity would contain experiences or outcomes that tap some of these same incentive sources for faculty.

Program Considerations

Among the many duties that accrue to the advising coordinator is consideration of ways and means to increase the incentive value of advising for faculty. Bowen (13) lists several practical keys for program implementation, in general,

that may be applicable for creating or fashioning incentive programs for advising and advisors.

First, define the goals and measures of performance in the advising program and hold individuals accountable for reasonable achievement. If the goals are clearly defined and reasonable, and attainable standards of achievement are agreed on, then both parties are served well by being held accountable. In the realm of demonstrating support for advisors the crucial elements are providing recognition, showing appreciation, and promoting faculty self-esteem.. The integrity and self-efficacy that come from honoring a worthwhile contract are only part of the benefit which make up the incentive value of an excellent advising program.

Second, renegotiate priorities; don't simply add new expectations for performance to a list that for most faculty is already too lengthy. This suggests, as well, that the coordinator must also become involved in helping advisors reduce or avoid some other academic duties if advising is to gain a higher priority in the advisor's order of things.

Third, create incentives that build on positives, and on personal wants rather than individual needs. The value of the incentive will be greater if the person desires it. The coordinator has no recourse but to know advisors sufficiently well so that incentives can be personally relevant to each rather than to an "imaginary" typical academician.

Fourth, tie the incentives to the primary motivators of the advisors. This means that the incentives should be

individualized and specific so as to respond to the most direct connection between advisor behavior and advisor rewards that are most relevant to each person. In the case of extrinsic rewards, the reward must be judged by the recipient as something valuable or important or both. In the case of intrinsic incentive systems, efforts that help an advisor identify how, or why, advising is satisfying will increase the reinforcing value for that individual.

Fifth, empower the person to use the incentives or rewards however and whenever it suits him or her. The freedom to choose when and how to use the reward may symbolize as much to the person as the reward itself.

Finally, the incentive value of the program is likely to be greater if the advising program is somewhat selective and exclusive. Being selected for participation in a positive and competitive program carries with it a special honor and obligation to perform. This outcome can even be enhanced further if the ceremonial occasions of the institution contain rites where outstanding advisor performance may be recognized. At the same time as these are "practical" steps, they clearly provide links to and scope for enhancing the faculty's perception of the intrinsic rewards attainable through advising.

A Model for Consideration

One model that could be very useful in clarifying the intrinsic nature of faculty members' work has been outlined by Hackman and Oldham. (14) They suggest that three psychological

states "-experienced meaningfulness of work, experienced responsibility for outcomes of the work, and knowledge of the actual results of the work activities"-- contribute to such outcomes such as motivation, satisfaction, and quality performance. Table 1 provides the essential characteristics of the model applied to the advising function.

Place Table 1 about here

In this model, skill variety refers to the variety of different activities involved in a job or task. Task identity is defined as "the degree to which a job required completion of a 'whole' and identifiable piece of work, that is, doing a job from beginning to end with a visible outcome. Task significance refers to the extent to which "the job has a substantial impact on the lives of other people." Autonomy refers to the degree of "freedom, independence, and discretion" that the job involves. Finally, feedback concerns the degree to which the job provides the advisor, or other participant, with information about his or her effectiveness.

The congruence between faculty views and administrator views (the latter presumed to reflect institutional mission) regarding the importance of advising is also central to this model. The fit may be viewed most profitably as an intervening variable between core job characteristics of advising and the critical psychological states suggested by the Hackman-Oldman model. High and low congruence are likely to interact differently with each of the job characteristics.

Furthermore, the dominant institutional priority is also likely to exert a significant influence. For instance, in a "research institution" one might expect that incongruence between the perception of advising held by the advisor and the primary mission of the organization may result in little incentive, motivation, or local recognition to be available for advisors. Since the "local" academic culture is fashioned by the research priority of the institution one would likely experience few sources of reinforcement for activities that do not contribute directly to the primary mission. Thus, even though advisors may have somewhat adequate control of the time devoted to their work they may find that local standards of "challenge" and "significance" are meant to apply to research and not to advising. Consequently, feedback about the advising task may contain little incentive value. Where congruence is high, that is, where institution and advisor agree about the importance of advising, then both intrinsic and extrinsic incentives are present to "recognize" the varied work of the academician.

On the other hand, in a "teaching institution" where one might expect motivation for advising to be somewhat higher and where advising is "pushed" by the institution as a specific, valued, form of teaching another consequence may be generated. The heavy teaching and advising loads experienced by faculty may require forfeiting of some job autonomy and some job challenge because of the press of academic duties. In this case, where advising, although important, is performed at a maintenance or

routine level because of heavy work loads, feedback about advising performance for low-level, or low priority, advising work may be viewed by the advisor as irrelevant or unrewarding, or both.

Nonetheless, feedback about performance in advising can have a saluatory effect as an incentive for the advisor. First, as mentioned earlier, feedback should enhance motivation for the task to the extent that it increases the recipient's perceptions of competence, that is task mastery. Second, the feedback should add an increment of information to the recipient over and above the information he or she already has. If the information about performance is redundant with that already possessed, no increase in the desire to respond due to competence would be expected to occur.(15) Third, the feedback from others or the task should not involve nor connote control over the advisor since freedom of choice regarding one's work is a critical variable influencing the strength or incentive value of the work for the advisor/professor.

Implications for the Institution

Our discussion of enhancing advising entails maintaining or achieving a delicate balance between individual and organizational priorities for freedom and control. To meet the educational demands of the future, higher education institutions must offer personnel policies and a comprehensive work environment that not only encourage but indeed assist faculty members to perform at the highest levels of excellence. (16) To do this, organization leaders must craft incentives that

acknowledge the special nature of academic employment, that capitalize in the rewards intrinsic to academic life, and that are sensitive to the special values and unique circumstances of professors from various disciplines and career stages.

One consideration is to include intellectually challenging discussions of the values and ideas that are the cultural and institutional bases for the advising role in the advisor-training program. This focus on the philosophical and ethical issues, the core values behind the advising role, may be critical in understanding the value of advising not only for the advisor but for the institution and its mission as well.

Organizational members become energized when an organizational purpose is clear, compelling, and somewhat open-ended. According to Louis (17), when a vision is incomplete, there is room for elaboration and refinement; the openness provides a vehicle for the member's self-expression. These discussions about the ideational base for advising contribute to the institutional process of what Harrison (18) calls alignment. Alignment occurs when organization members act as parts of an integrated whole, each finding the opportunity to express his or her true purpose through the organization's purpose. Through the act of expression, associated with filling out and going beyond the barebones vision of the ideational base for advising, the advisor gains a sense of making a contribution which, in turn, links back into providing a condition of high performance.

A second consideration is sensitivity to the faculty's need to take an active role in shaping their work environment. Both formation of organization structure and policy regarding advising program operation are enhanced by an administrative decision to encourage participative management of the advising program. This involvement in shaping the work connects members to one another. This process, in Harrison's terms, is attunement. Where alignment refers to a connection between member and mission, attunement calls attention to a connection among members and serves the organization function of maintenance. While the process of expression, that is examining the ideational base, seems fundamental to alignment, the process of witnessing seems to underlie attunement. In witnessing, someone notices and acknowledges another's expression. Acts of expression about the ideational base of advising convey the person's experience; in the noticing by another, the experience is confirmed.

A third consideration concerns the increased level of discussion about the balance between research and teaching. One hopes that professors seek to integrate their academic life roles in response to this dialogue and that the advising program would provide avenues for "researchers" and "teachers" to find some aspect of the advising program to fit their individual needs.

In a related manner, faculty feel some need to have a perspective of controlled, but active, movement within their professional career structures. Attention to the relationship

of incentives that accrue in the advising program and the other personnel or task needs of the institution may result in creative role restructuring by faculty that may benefit not only the individual but the institution itself. Such outcomes may aid institutions to ease the difference between faculty who may be characterized, in the words of Kanter, (19) as the "moving" or the "stuck," or those who perceive themselves as having little chance for mobility or advancement.

Epilogue

It is obvious in this discussion that the general framework of fashioning incentives for advising is one that attempts to connect self-motivation to the activity of personal responsibility. In other words, one hopes that the personal responsibility aspect of academic work, as found in advising, may be associated by the advisor as one distinctly effective manner in which to pursue one's self-interest. Thus, the personal responsibility action of advising, in the service of self-interest, may become an effective tool for enhancing the personal well-being of the advisor and, one hopes, of the advisee as well, and for contributing to the general good of the institution.

If the institution is serious about crafting incentives for individual faculty members, a crucial role is that held by the academic department chair. If faculty behavior, in advising or any other task area, is to be identified and highlighted as one means of furthering institutional mission and enhancing faulty

vitality, then the chair is a pivotal, influencial, and strategic actor to contribute to that end.

An even more important role is that of the advising coordinator. Is this view realistic? Do we really expect to find advising coordinators who can discern both the systemic and psychological dynamics of their institution sufficiently well to understand and influence intrinsic motivations of faculty? What is proposed here is that advising coordinators provide assistance other than advising "aid" to advisors. In many cases the provision of mere compensatory advising help, that is advising for the advisor, or providing other technical advising information, is not facilitative of "advisor development." Our view is that because such a role, and its attendant consequences, is necessary for the long-term welfare of the institution that, indeed, such role expectations are realistic and will be met. Each reader will have to determine what individual coordinator characteristics would be necessary for such an endeavor to be attempted, and to be successful, at their institution.

Our discussion has focused mainly on the personal effects, or effects on the individual, of incentives associated with advising. People do not live their professional lives as social isolates. Many of the challenges and difficulties they face reflect common problems requiring sustained collective efforts to produce significant change. Baldwin (20) suggests that incentives that promote narrow, special-purpose scholarship and faculty competition must be balanced by incentives that favor

cooperation, collegiality, and a collective identity for the professoriate. Academic organizations and program policies that enlist academics in a common professional cause greater than their individual intellectual activities should enhance the well-being of faculty members and others in academe. Perhaps advising programs and the challenges and opportunities they generate may provide one source of such outcomes for our colleges and universities.

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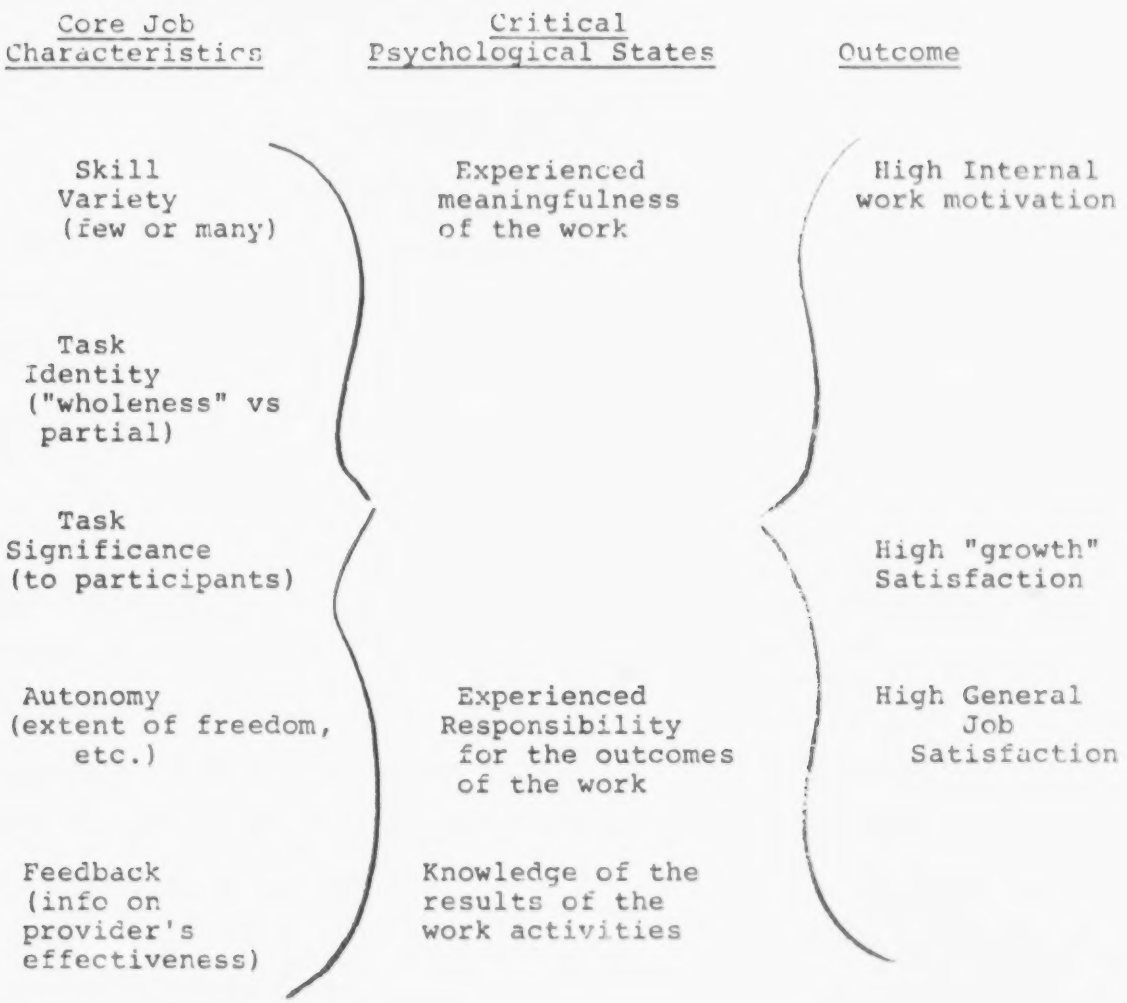
Table 1

The Hackman - Oldham Model


Core Job Characteristics
Critical Psychological States
Outcome
Skill Variety (few or many)
Task Identity ("wholeness" vs partial)
Task Significance (to participants)
Autonomy (extent of freedom, etc.)
Feedback (info on provider's effectiveness)
Experienced meaningfulness of the work
Experienced Responsibility for the outcomes of the work
Knowledge of the results of the work activities
High Internal work motivation
High "growth" Satisfaction
High General Job Satisfaction

Note:

Although not included in the model this writer would suggest that the complexity of the advising task under consideration would also be a key factor.